THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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American Embassy,
Guatemala City, Guatemala, April 14, 1953

CONFIDENTIAL - OFFICIAL

SECRET - SECURITY INFORMATION

Dear John Fisher:

Referring to our talks about Mr. Petrilli during my recent visit to Washington, I enclose, as of possible interest, a memorandum of a conversation which Mr. Wardlaw yesterday had with Mr. Petrilli.

My Washington visit was very helpful and I was glad we could have some time together.

Warm remembrances and every good wish!

Yours sincerely,

Rudolf E. Schoenfeld

Enclosure

Memorandum of Conversation with
Mr. A. I. Petrilli, April 13, 1953

John J. Fisher, Esquire,
Guatemalan desk officer,
Room 4163 NS,
Department of State,
Washington, D. C.

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SECURITY INFORMATION

April 13, 1953

CONVERSATION WITH MR. JOHN M. PETRILLI

Mr. John M. PETRILLI, who occasionally volunteers none-too-reliable information to the Embassy, called at my office today to discuss the present crisis. He stated that on the basis of information obtained by his anti-Communist contacts he knows that the Guatemalan Government had carefully planned the Salama affair to strengthen its case before the United Nations and to give the Government an opportunity for thoroughly frightening the opposition. He said the Government was also particularly interested in forcing from those arrested confessions implicating the United Fruit Company in the affair. He stated that the role of Carlos SIMONS in the uprising was not clear, although there is no suspicion that Simons was working with the Government. On the night of March 27 Mario SANDOVAL, who is now in prison, and Domingo GOICOLEA, who is in hiding, and who are respectively President and Treasurer of the anti-Communist student organization, told him that Simons had a few days earlier travelled throughout the country warning local anti-Communist leaders to be ready for a blow against the Government. Many of these leaders came to Sandoval and Goicolea asking confirmation of this instruction, but since the two student leaders knew nothing about the project they had told the local leaders that it was not the work of their organization. Mr. Petrilli said that the money which Simons used in the revolt came from certain Mexican oil interests, although he had no details about this. He also said that the anti-Communist groups will not publish protests in the newspapers against the mistreatment of the prisoners now held, since the Government would merely turn upon the signers of these protests.

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Mr. Petrilli also mentioned that the market women wish to hold a demonstration during Mr. Cabot's coming visit to the city, calling Mr. Cabot's attention to the pro-Communist activities of the Government. On the other hand, he said the CGTG plans to demonstrate in the local airport against Mr. Cabot when he lands.

Mr. Petrilli reported he has reliable information that submarine periscopes have been seen on two recent occasions in Lake Izabal and that special signal lights, presumably for communicating with the submarines, have been placed at Government installations on the lake. He said he would report this to the Air Attaché's office.

He stated that the Soviet magazines which are sold on the local streets are given to the vendors with the understanding that they can keep proceeds from the sales.

Andrew B. Wardlaw

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4/13/53